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SUBJECT: KAZAKHSTAN: PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION ROUNDUP,
DECEMBER 2

REF: Almaty 4171

[11.](#) (U) This is the eleventh and final in a series of weekly election roundups in advance of Kazakhstan's December 4, 2005 presidential elections. Items were drawn primarily from the local press and media.

Candidates Wrap Up Election Campaigns

[12.](#) (U) On November 30, President Nursultan Nazarbayev ended his election campaign with a bang. More than 5,000 people, looking relaxed and joyful, gathered at the Palace for Sports in Astana to show their support for the incumbent. Nazarbayev delivered a speech outlining the future of Kazakhstan. "I see Kazakhstan among the 50 most competitive countries of the world, where every family has its own home, a car, and a business," he said. Nazarbayev performed a duet with a well-known opera singer, which elicited an enthusiastic applause from the audience. Senate Chairman Nurtay Abykayev hailed the president by whistling. Similar mass meetings in support of Nazarbayev were held on the same day in every regional center of Kazakhstan.

[13.](#) (U) Tuyakbay's final election campaign events in Southern Kazakhstan Oblast and in Almaty occurred without major incident. In some regions of Southern Kazakhstan people allegedly recruited by local authorities tried to disrupt Tuyakbay's meetings with the electorate by yelling into microphones they brought and by insulting Tuyakbay. The police reportedly did not intervene. Tuyakbay plans to end his campaign in Kzylorda Oblast. "I have become convinced that local authorities will try to falsify the election because they understand that if I win, local officials involved in preparing unfair election technology will be out of work," Tuyakbay said.

[14.](#) (U) Alikhan Baymenov's campaign will wrap up with stops in Taldykurgan, Astana, Arkalyk, and Zhezkazgan, his hometown. At a briefing in Almaty on November 29, Baymenov said, "During this election campaign I witnessed those who call themselves democrats, using financial and mass media resources, trying to turn the political situation in the Qry into a race on vilifying each other, because they understand they are not able to compete in a fair competition." He added, "The majority understand that if those who use democratic shields seize power it would be a step back because it would lead to chaos and the redistribution of property, and the interests of ordinary people would be left on the sidelines." Baymenov noted that he had held 60 meetings in more than 40 settlements.

[15.](#) (U) On November 29, Yerasyl Abylkasymov visited Karaganda Oblast. While in Karaganda, Abylkasymov said his platform always found common ground with the electorate and that his program was designed for people who remembered and respected the communist past. Abylkasymov added he would tirelessly fight against those who impose Western values on our people. Abylkasymov announced he would finish his election campaign in Zhezkazgan on November 30.

[16.](#) (U) On November 30, Mels Yeleusizov met in Almaty with independent observers from France and with OSCE observation mission head Audrey Glover. During his meeting with the French observers, Yeleusizov announced his plan to establish the Green Party irrespective of the election results. He also mentioned that the government provided every candidate with equal access to mass media.

[17.](#) (U) On November 30, the election headquarters of Baymenov, Tuyakbay and Abylkasymov issued joint statement calling on the CEC to do away with the electronic voting system. The e-voting system creates opportunities for electoral law violations and fraud, the statement said.

President Warns Against Splits in Society

18. (U) On November 22, President Nazarbayev delivered a speech at the Eleventh Assembly of the Peoples of Kazakhstan, urging the passage legislation that would

prevent splits in society. A multiparty system should not grow into an open confrontation like we are witnessing now, Nazarbayev said. Splits in society hinder further progress; this would be a dangerous development for our statehood, warned the President.

President Orders Akims Not to Falsify Vote

19. (U) On November 23, according to presidential adviser Yermukhamet Yertysbayev, President Nazarbayev ordered top government officials in the regions to prevent falsification of the election results. Nazarbayev met with the akims to deliver this message personally.

CEC Pledges to Publish Results in 24 Hours

10. (SBU) On November 28, CEC Chairman Onalsyn Zhumabekov told Ambassador Ordway that the CEC would publish preliminary results of the vote within 24 hours after the polls close. "Given the huge territory of our country and long distances between our settlements, we have assumed a difficult commitment to publish preliminary results of the election within 24 hours after the end of the voting," Zhumabekov said. "In addition, we have pledged to publish the results by precincts on our web site," Zhumabekov pointed out. The CEC plans to announce the official results within 10 days, by December 14. Representatives of the press were present at the meeting and reported Zhumabekov's commitment widely.

11. (U) In order to streamline the voting process, the CEC issued resolutions on printing and delivering paper ballots to precincts, on specifying IDs that voters would have to present at voting stations, and on procedures on the issuance of protocols at precincts where voting would be done both by paper ballots and e-voting. According to Zhumabekov, 15% of precincts would be equipped with the e-voting system, which would allow 32% of voters to vote electronically.

12. (U) The Sailau e-voting system still remains a major point of controversy. On November 24, the public integrity committee issued a positive assessment of the Sailau e-voting system, claiming it was user-friendly and secure. The opposition, however, is concerned that the e-voting system is vulnerable to manipulation. The CEC announced that the Sailau system would be put into operation at 3:00 AM on December 4.

Legislation to Lift Ban on Rallies

13. (U) On November 28, Zhumabekov informed Ambassador Ordway that amendments lifting the ban on rallies and demonstrations during the period after the voting day and before official announcement of the results had been received by Parliament. Responding to a question whether the amendments could be passed before December 4, Zhumabekov said it was a constitutional law to be amended, which would require at least two readings at a joint session of both houses of Parliament. As of December 2 the legislation had not been approved.

Election Observers

14. (SBU) On November 28, the CEC accredited 163 representatives of foreign mass media. As of November 28, 1,590 foreign observers and journalists had been accredited including, 201 foreign observers from 27 countries, 473 OSCE/ODIHR observers from 42 countries, 417 CIS observers, 107 observers from 8 international organizations, and 392 representatives of foreign mass media from 23 countries. The accreditation process ended on November 28. (Note: the final observer figure will be slightly higher, as accreditation for 16 U.S. Embassy observers was issued after the deadline due to delays at the MFA. End note.)

15. (U) CEC Chairman Zhumabekov spoke highly of the CEC's cooperation with the OSCE/ODIHR and other observer missions. Zhumabekov characterized the second interim

report by the OSCE/ODIHR EOM as generally impartial. He said that the CEC had adopted half of the recommendations made by OSCE observers, including annulling the use of envelopes for paper ballots and granting permission to

interpreters to escort international observers and reporters.

16. (SBU) On November 24, ENEMO held a press conference to announce that the group had managed to register with the CEC under the auspices of NDI (reftel). The press conference elicited an immediate reaction from the procuracy, which warned ENEMO that it could not make any independent statements because it can only operate as a part of the NDI observation mission. Post has been working with ENEMO and NDI to ensure that future statements are presented in a way consistent with ENEMO's status.

Local NGO Denied Accreditation

17. (U) On November 29, a local NGO known as the Election & Democracy International Association (EDIA) held a press conference in Almaty to announce that their request for accreditation as election observers had been denied by the MFA. According to EDIA's president, Pavel Lobachev, on November 16 the MFA notified him that his request for accreditation had been denied because the group did not meet the definition of an "international organization" as defined by Kazakhstani law. EDIA was not recognized as an international organization because it was registered as an NGO in Kazakhstan. (Note: EDIA, which was founded in 2004, received accreditation to observe last year's legislative elections. Its report was generally positive, causing some journalists to speculate that the MFA's interpretation of the law was actually aimed at other observation missions like CIS-EMO and that EDIA unfortunately fell into the same category. Lobachev did not object to this reasoning. End note.)

Kyrgyzstanis Deported

18. (U) On November 27, more than one hundred nationals of Kyrgyzstan were deported from Kazakhstan. They were detained in Almaty by Zhetysy district police officers in the morning of November 27. The detainees claimed that they were forced into two buses, without explanation, and taken to the Korday border post. The police confiscated their migration cards and marked their passports with deportation stamps, which bars the holder entry into Kazakhstan for 3 to 5 years. Kyrgyzstani officials are reportedly investigating the matter. The Express K newspaper speculated on November 30 that those deported were "revolutionists" seeking to breach civic order. "They were offended because were not allowed to help export revolution to brotherly Kazakhstan. At the same time, some internet sites in Kyrgyzstan carried information saying that the deported Kyrgyzstani migrants were getting ready to carry out a revolution on behalf of their Kazakh brothers," the newspaper reported.

19. (U) On November 30, Kazakhstan's Ambassador to Kyrgyzstan, Umurzak Uzbekov, said that 108 Kyrgyzstani citizens had been deported from Kazakhstan because they were staying in the country illegally. "All of them had been working in Almaty markets. They had no registration and had no rights to do business." (Interfax, November 30)

Security Tightened on Kazakhstan-Kyrgyzstan Border

20. (SBU) Kazakhstan has tightened security on its border with Kyrgyzstan, the National Security Committee (KNB) announced on November 29. New security measures will include increasing the number of border guards, rotating guards more frequently, and tightening border control procedures. "The regime has been established to prevent undesirable elements from getting into the country," the KNB said. Although the press characterized the measures as the closure of the border, the KNB stressed that the measures represented a tightening of control rather than closure. In discussions with Embassy representatives,

Border Guard officials would not confirm any link to the presidential elections.

21. (SBU) Kazakhstan's ambassador to Kyrgyzstan explicitly linked the two events, however. In a November 30 press conference in Bishkek, Ambassador Umurzak Uzbekov stated that "a temporary regime restricting the crossing of the Kyrgyzstan-Kazakhstan border has been imposed since November 28 due to the presidential election in Kazakhstan." "According to our Kyrgyzstani colleagues, there is a big flood of drugs and weapons being trafficked through the Central Asia, including the territory of Kyrgyzstan. The tightened regime for crossing the border is related to ensuring security during

the election. This regime may remain until December 8. The regime does not impede cross border travel Kyrgyzstani citizens who have diplomatic and service passports and who are visiting Kazakhstan for service purposes or family problems," Uzbekov added. (Interfax, November 30)

Police Operations Intensify

122. (U) On November 30, Prime Minister Daniyal Akhmetov ordered the Ministry of Emergency Situations and the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources to tighten security over strategically important facilities including ones that provide utilities.

123. (U) On November 25, about 20,000 policemen were deployed to provide security for election precincts. A coordination center for police operations related to the elections was set up at the Ministry of Internal Affairs. All police stations have mobilized teams of investigators to act on any possible violations of the law. The number of police patrols was increased. (Note: Post has no information to corroborate a kub.kz report that MOD troops have been sent to Almaty, Astana, and Shymkent to provide reinforced security. End note.)

Universities Dismissed Early

124. (SBU) A representative of the OSCE/ODIHR EOM confirmed to POEC chief on December 2 that the mission had verified reports that universities in Almaty had released their students early in order to discourage political activism and/or protests. Some students were threatened with expulsion if they remained at school and took part in political activities.

Candidates Present Campaign Speeches

125. (U) The four challengers chose to use their government-provided 15 minutes of airtime on Kazakhstan One late in the campaign. Baymenov's address was aired on November 30, Eleusizov's on November 29, and Abylkasymov and Tuyakbay's on November 28. The national television channel initially refused to air Tuyakbay's taped address, however, citing article 29 of the election law which makes it a crime to spread ideas that promote social discord. After intervention by the CEC, the station aired the address in full.

CEC Pledges Fair Access to Media

126. (U) "The rights of candidates to place their campaign materials in official mass media at the expense of the state will be fully realized," CEC chairman Zhumabekov said on November 29. Zhumabekov noted that Kazakhstanskaya Pravda and Yegemen Kazakhstan published an address by Tuyakbay in Kazakh on November 29. Earlier in the week, both newspapers refused to publish Tuyakbay's statement because it contained a reference to the regime as authoritarian. In response, Tuyakbay's headquarters submitted a complaint to the CEC. In reference to Tuyakbay's complaint, Zhumabekov commented that "The law allows the editor to examine materials and to make his decision on whether to publish or not the material depending on the content. The editors acted according to the rights provided by the law. Candidates who were

denied publication can appeal the ruling with the court."

Update on Nurkadilov's Death

127. (U) An anonymous source from the Ministry of Internal Affairs was quoted by Interfax on November 29 as saying that Zamanbek Nurkadilov committed suicide. The source reportedly said that "the cause for the suicide was family conflicts and quarrels with his wife Makpal Zhunusova. According to the investigation, on the eve of his death Nurkadilov was depressed. Empty boxes of strong sleeping pills - Imovan and Semnol - were found on the scene."

128. (U) The same day in Almaty, Serikkali Musin, Makpal Zhunusova's lawyer, held a press conference to brief journalists on the investigation. "Suicide is out of the question. We believe it was a murder. Murder on the grounds of family conflicts is impossible. A third party is responsible," Musin said. According to Musin, on November 24 the police examined the scene and found numerous blood tracks all over the building including the corridor, the bathroom, and the adjacent rooms. Musin suggested the tracks were evidence of resistance. Police also examined Zhunusova's fingers and clothes for traces

of gunpowder and the results were negative, Musin said. He claimed that the body was covered by a sheet when discovered, with the gun on top of the sheet. Musin said that Zhusupov did not attend the press conference because she was depressed and on the verge of a breakdown due to pressure from her husband's relatives and the police.

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